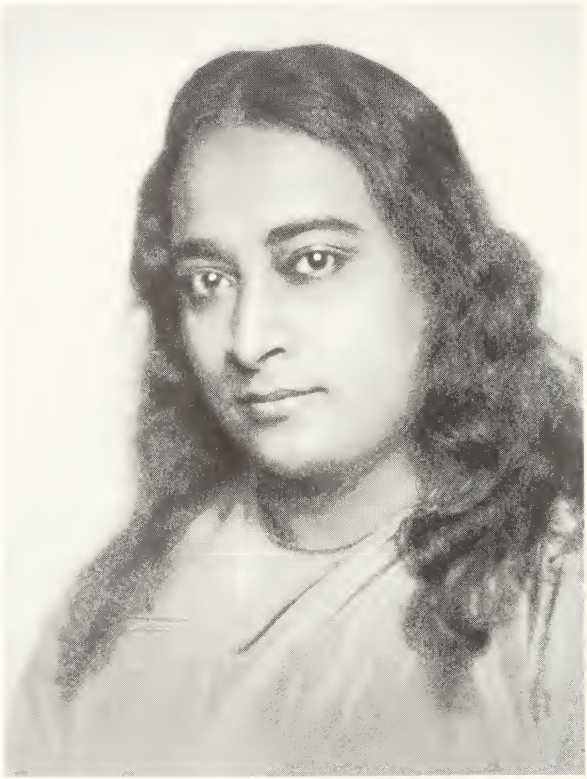
INNER PEACE

HOW TO BE CALMLY ACTIVE AND ACTIVELY CALM

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2014

https://archive.org/details/innerpeacehowtob00yoga



PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA
(1893–1952)

INNER PEACE

How to Be Calmly Active and Actively Calm

PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

Self-Realization Fellowship
FOUNDED 1920
Paramahansa Yogananda

ABOUT THIS BOOK: *Inner Peace: How to Be Calmly Active and Actively Calm* is a compilation of extracts from Paramahansa Yogananda's writings, lectures, and informal talks. These selections originally appeared in his books, in articles in *Self-Realization* (the magazine he founded in 1925), in the three anthologies of his collected talks and essays, and in other Self-Realization Fellowship publications.

Authorized by the International Publications Council of
SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP
3880 San Rafael Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90065-3298

The Self-Realization Fellowship name and emblem (shown above) appear on all SRF books, recordings, and other publications, assuring the reader that a work originates with the society established by Paramahansa Yogananda and faithfully conveys his teachings.

Copyright © 1999 Self-Realization Fellowship
All rights reserved

First edition

ISBN 0-87612-010-9
Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 99-71255
Printed in the United States of America
12873-54321

CONTENTS

Preface, *by Sri Daya Mata* xiii

CHAPTER I

"Where Can I Find Peace?" 1

CHAPTER II

Meditation: The Science of Being "Actively Calm" 19

CHAPTER III

The Spiritual Art of Relaxation: Removing Stress From Body and Mind 59

CHAPTER IV

How to Be "Calmly Active"—Centered in Peace No Matter What You Are Doing 89

CHAPTER V

Peace in Your Daily Life: Essential Principles and Practices 107

CHAPTER VI

The Wisdom Perspective That Leads to Inner Peace 161

Preface

By Sri Daya Mata

President and spiritual head of Self-Realization Fellowship/Yogoda Satsanga Society of India since 1955

Peace, serenity, inner balance are mere words until we actually see their expression in someone we meet—or feel their manifestation in ourselves. Throughout my twenty-some years with Paramahansa Yogananda, I was blessed to experience daily the indescribable aura of peace that emanated from him; it empowered him with a remarkable ability to put all who came to him in touch with the deep well-spring of peace in their own souls.

Our era's advances in technology have been amazing, but oftentimes they seem to improve outer conditions only at the high cost of increased stress and complexity in our personal lives. As the quest for balance becomes more and more of a priority, people the world over are realizing that perhaps the most necessary "new" science is an ancient one: Yoga, whose timeless methods of harmonizing

body, mind, and soul offer a truly effective system for attaining inner peace.*

From the wisdom-trove of Paramahansa Yogananda, we are taught the most valuable of yoga "postures": "to stand unshaken," as he often put it, "midst the crash of breaking worlds." To become unshakably anchored in inner security, in "the peace which passeth all understanding"—that is the promise genuine spirituality can fulfill, and that is the focus of this present volume.

Calm inner serenity, Paramahansa Yogananda taught, does not require a timid withdrawal from energetic active pursuits. Indeed, his own extraordinary outer accomplishments of successfully pioneering India's teachings of meditation in the West required the utmost of a dynamic, creative personality. He carried on his work not primarily in some secluded hideaway, but in the bustle of cities like New York, Chicago, Los Angeles—in the noisiest and most restless places on the planet! Yet he was

*Though many persons think of yoga primarily in terms of physical postures and exercises *(hatha yoga)*, the term properly refers to a comprehensive system of meditation and balanced spiritual living whose ultimate aim is union of the individual soul with the infinite Spirit.

always joyously centered in the native imperturbable calmness of the soul.

One of his followers' favorite stories about Paramahansaji is of a spontaneous demonstration (fortunately never repeated) of the power of that peace. In New York City, three robbers with guns accosted him on the street. He simply gazed at them, and said: "Do you want money? Take it." He held out his wallet. Inexplicably, the gunmen made no move. In his presence, they were completely transfixed by the spiritual vibrations he radiated. Finally one of them blurted out: "Beg your pardon. We can't do it." They turned and ran away.

Whenever he was in public places, people passing by would stop and stare at him, and ask us who were with him, "Who is he? Who is that man?" There was always about him a quiet, tangible vibration that drew people to him.

In this compilation we have gathered—from Paramahansaji's comprehensive books, essays, lectures, and talks to his students—a sampling of wisdom that you can apply to experience as a daily reality the tranquility and assurance of which he speaks. This handbook will introduce you to the

spectrum of principles and practical advice he gave for creating a blessed inner harmony: the art of creative outer activity without losing peace of mind; methods of stress removal and relaxation; identifying and transcending disturbing emotional states—anger, fear, worry, oversensitivity—the enemies of inner serenity; and, most important, communion with the divine source of peace in the depths of your own soul, the temple of God within you.

Peace of the soul mends fragmented personal and family harmony, and also the disintegrating fabric of our communities. It has the power, if taken as a way of life, to bring balance and healing to your existence; your vibration of peacefulness, in turn, will touch all who cross your path and will contribute in a profound way to the cause of lasting peace in our global family.

Los Angeles
August 1999

PEACE

Paramahansa Yogananda

Peace flows through my heart, and blows through
me as a zephyr.
Peace fills me like a fragrance.
Peace runs through me like rays.
Peace stabs the heart of noise and worries.
Peace burns through my disquietude.
Peace, like a globe of fire, expands and fills my
omnipresence.
Peace, like an ocean, rolls on in all space.
Peace, like red blood, vitalizes the veins of my thoughts.
Peace like a boundless aureole, encircles my body
of infinity.
Peace-flames blow through the pores of my flesh and
through all space.
The perfume of peace flows over the gardens of
blossoms.
The wine of peace runs perpetually through the wine
press of all hearts.
Peace is the breath of stones, stars, and sages.
Peace is the ambrosial wine of Spirit flowing from the
cask of silence,
Which I quaff with my countless mouths of atoms.

CHAPTER

I

"Where Can I Find Peace?"

Peace emanates from the soul, and is the sacred inner environment in which true happiness unfolds.

Through meditation one can experience a stable, silent inner peace that can be a permanently soothing background for all harmonious or wholesome activities demanded by life's responsibilities. Lasting happiness lies in maintaining this evenly peaceful state of mind.

Everything you do should be done with peace. That is the best medicine for your body, mind, and soul. It is the most wonderful way to live.

Do everything with calmness, peace.

There is a cure for stress...

Calmness is the ideal state in which we should receive all life's experiences. Nervousness is the opposite of calmness, and its prevalence today makes it very nearly a world disease.

The best cure for nervousness is the cultivation of calmness. One who is naturally calm does not lose his sense of reason, justice, or humor under any circumstances....

Poise is a beautiful quality. We should pattern our life by a triangular guide: calmness and sweetness are the two sides; the base is happiness....Whether one acts quickly or slowly, in solitude or in the busy marts of men, his center should be peaceful, poised. Christ is an example of that ideal. Everywhere, he demonstrated peace. He passed through every conceivable test without losing his poise.

Live in the divine consciousness of your soul.

We are souls—eternal, immutable—made in God's image of immortal bliss. Our lives should continuously reflect that ever-new joy. I never let anyone take away my inner happiness; and you too should learn that art of intrepid soul living that can smile away whatever troubles may come.

The true state of the Self, the soul, is bliss, wisdom, love, peace. It is to be so happy that no matter what you are doing you enjoy it. Isn't that much better than to blunder through the world like a restless demon, unable to find satisfaction in anything?

Calmness is the breath of immortality...

Those who deeply meditate feel a wonderful inner quiet.

Calmness is one of the attributes of the immortality within you. ... When you worry, there is static coming through your mind radio. God's song is the song of calmness. Nervousness is the static; calmness is the voice of God speaking to you through the radio of your soul.

Nervousness is the handmaiden of change and death; when you are calm, even death cannot frighten you, for you know you are a god.

Calmness is the living breath of God's immortality in you.

The more you feel peace in meditation, the closer you are to God. He moves nearer and

nearer to you the deeper you enter into meditation. The peace of meditation is the language and embracing comfort of God.

Learn to live in that eternal happiness and peace which is God.

Take an honest look at your life...

Looking at the vast panorama of this world, at the crowds of humanity rushing hot-haste through their span of life, one cannot but wonder what it is all about. Where are we going? What is the motive? What is the best and surest way to reach our destination?

Most of us rush aimlessly, like runaway automobiles, without any plan. Dashing heedlessly along the road of life, we fail to realize the purpose of our travel; we seldom notice if we are on winding devious ways that lead nowhere, or on straight paths that lead directly to our goal. How can we find our goal if we never think of it?

Have you permitted your life to become warped by forces seemingly stronger than your own? Is your life under your control? Do not

sink into the rut of mediocrity. Rise above the crowd. Step out of the choking monotony of ordinary existence into a finer, more colorful life of achievement and ever new peace.

Ask yourself what is the purpose of your life. You have been made in the image of God; that is your real Self. Realizing the image of God within you is the ultimate success—infinite joy, fulfillment of every desire, victory over all difficulties of the body and incursions of the world.

*God is my real Self

Winning the battle of everyday life...

A lump of sand cannot withstand the erosive effect of the ocean's waves; an individual who lacks imperturbable inner peace cannot remain tranquil during mental conflict. But as a diamond remains unchanged no matter how many waves swirl around it, so also a peace-crystallized individual remains radiantly serene even when trials beset him from all sides. Out of the changeful waters of life, let us salvage through meditation the diamond of unchangeable soul-consciousness, which sparkles with the everlasting joy of Spirit.

As certain training is needed for engaging in the art of war, so does our engagement in battling with active life. Untrained warriors are soon killed on the battlefield; so also persons untrained in the art of preserving their inner peace

are quickly riddled by the bullets of worry and restlessness in active life.

If you can retain your inner peace, therein lies your supreme victory. No matter how you are situated in life, never feel justified in losing your peace. When that is gone and you cannot think clearly, you have lost the battle. If you never lose your peace, you will find you are always victorious, no matter what the outcome of your problems. That is the way to conquer life.

Make life an enjoyable experience of the soul...

Practice evenminded calmness all the time. Become a king, an absolute monarch, of your own mental realm of calmness.... Let nothing disturb your peaceable kingdom of calmness. Night and day carry with you the joy of "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding."

This evenmindedness, when maintained by regular deep meditation, removes the boredom, disappointment, and sorrow from everyday life, making it instead a very interesting and enjoyable experience of the soul.

Your inner and outer environment...

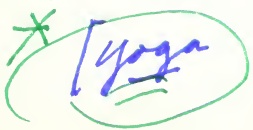
This world is not the same to all people. Each one lives in his own little domain....Peace and harmony may reign in one person's world; strife and war in another's. But whatever be the circumstances of one's environment, it consists of both an inner world and an outer world. The outside world is the one in which your life engages in action and interaction. The world inside of you determines your happiness or unhappiness.

To exist without peace of mind in this world is to dwell in a kind of Hades. But the man of divine perceptions finds the earth a blissful abode.

Only those who partake of the harmony within their souls know the harmony that runs

through nature. Whosoever lacks this inner harmony feels also a lack of it in the world. The mind in chaos finds chaos all around.... But he who has inner peace can abide in this state even in the midst of outer discord.

Quiet the outgoing mental restlessness and turn the mind within. Harmonize your thoughts and desires with the all-fulfilling realities you already possess in your soul. Then you will see the underlying harmony in your life and in all nature. If you harmonize your hopes and expectations with this inherent harmony, you will float through life on buoyant wings of peace. The beauty and depth of yoga lies in its bestowal of this invariable tranquility.



Don't wait until tomorrow...

The world worships men of power, like Alexander the Great and Napoleon, but think of their mental states! Then think of the peace that Christ had. His peace could not be taken from him. We think we will seek that peace "tomorrow." Anyone who reasons this way will never find it. *Seek it now.*

Most people are like butterflies, flitting aimlessly. They never seem to really get anywhere or to stop for more than a moment before they are attracted by some new diversion. The bee works and prepares for hard times. But the butterfly lives only for today. When winter comes, the butterfly is gone, while the bee has stored-up food to live on. We must learn to gather and store the honey of God's peace and power.

Focus your attention within. You will feel a new power, a new strength, a new peace—in body, mind, and spirit.

You have the privilege and choice to make your own heaven right here; you have all the means to do so.

By scientific yoga meditation, establish your palace of peace on the rock of ages, the indestructible inner peace of God.

Find the kingdom of celestial, perpetual happiness within, and heaven will reign in the territory of silence, or in the noise and the activity of cities, or wherever one may happen to be.

When you have peace in every movement of your body, peace in your thinking and in your will power, peace in your love, and peace and God in your ambitions, remember, you have connected your life with God.

Connect your life with God.

CHAPTER

II

Meditation: The Science of Being "Actively Calm"

The boundless sea of tranquility in Spirit.

Tranquility is the nature of God -- man as a soul has that same nature of calmness.

You cannot buy peace; you must know how to manufacture it within, in the stillness of your daily practices in meditation.

Everything in the phenomenal world displays activity and changefulness, but tranquility is the nature of God. Man as a soul has within himself that same nature of calmness. When in his consciousness he can level and still the three mental states of upheaval—the waves of sorrow and gladness and the dips of indiffer-

ence between them—he perceives within himself the placid ocean of spiritual soul-calmness expanding into the boundless sea of tranquility in Spirit.

To meditate is to be actively calm...

Meditation is "active calmness." Passive calmness, as in sleep or idle daydreaming, is essentially different from active calmness—the positive state of peace found in scientific meditation.

Every night in sleep you have a taste of peace and joy. While you are in deep slumber, God makes you live in the tranquil superconsciousness, in which all the fears and worries of this existence are forgotten. By meditation you can experience that holy state of mind when you are awake, and be constantly immersed in healing peace.

Though you may be able to perform great worldly feats, you never will know joy equal to that which comes through meditation, when

the thoughts are silent and your mind is tuned to the peace of God. . .

Meditation opens wide all the closed inner doors of your body, mind, and soul to admit the surge of God's power. Your whole body and entire being changes when you practice meditation regularly. Contact with God brings inner harmony into your life as you merge with His peace. But you must meditate earnestly, consistently, and continually to realize fully the rewarding effects of that Supreme Force.

The ordinary man is all the time restless. When he begins to practice meditation, he is once in a while calm, most of the time restless. As he meditates more deeply, he becomes half the time calm, half the time restless. With longer, faithful practice, he is most of the time calm, and only once in a while restless. As he perse-

veres, he reaches the state wherein he is always calm, never restless. Where motion ceases, God begins.*

* "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalms 46:10).

The psychology of calmness...

If you place a pot of water under the rays of the moon and then agitate the water, you create a distorted reflection of the moon. When you still the waves in the pot, the reflection becomes clear. The time when the water in the pot is quiet and clearly reflecting the moon, is comparable to the meditative state of peace, and the still deeper state of calmness. In the peace of meditation all waves of sensations and thoughts are absent from the mind. In the deeper state of calmness, one perceives in that stillness the moonèd reflection of God's presence.

As meditative peace deepens into calmness and the ultimate positive state of bliss, the meditator experiences a joy that is ever new and all-satisfying.

Real unending joy lies in attuning the con-

sciousness to its true, ever calm soul nature by meditation, and in thus preventing the mind from riding on the crests of sorrow and happiness or from sinking into the depths of indifference.

Plunge into the inner silence (peace) again and again by practicing the methods of concentration and meditation I have given you, and you will find great peace and happiness.

The first proof of God's presence is an ineffable peace. This evolves into joy humanly inconceivable. Once you have touched the Source of truth and life, all nature will respond to you. Finding God within, you will find Him without, in all people and all conditions.

meditation:
1. peace -- absence of sensations, thoughts
2. calmness -- in the stillness of peace, perceive God's presence.
3. bliss -- the real unending joy when attuned to one's true, ever-calm soul nature

Meditation is the most practical science...

Meditation is the science of God-realization. It is the most practical science in the world.* Most people would want to meditate if they understood its value and experienced its beneficial effects. The ultimate object of meditation is to attain conscious awareness of God, and of the soul's eternal oneness with Him. What achievement could be more purposeful and useful than to harness limited human faculties to the omnipresence and omnipotence of the Creator? God-realization bestows on the meditator the blessings of the Lord's peace, love, joy, power, and wisdom.

* An introductory form of meditation as taught by Paramahansa Yogananda begins on page 30. The comprehensive set of techniques he gave—the step-by-step yoga science of concentration and meditation—is given in his printed *Self-Realization Fellowship Lessons*. See page 121 of this book.

Meditation utilizes concentration in its highest form. Concentration consists in freeing the attention from distractions and in focusing it on any thought in which one may be interested. Meditation is that special form of concentration in which the attention has been liberated from restlessness and is focused on God. Meditation, therefore, is concentration used to know God.

To begin a meditation...

1. Sit on a straight chair, or in a cross-legged position on a firm surface. Keep the spine straight and the chin parallel to the floor.

If you have assumed the correct posture, your body will be stable, yet relaxed, so that it is possible to remain completely still, without moving a muscle. Such stillness, devoid of restless body movements and adjustments, is essential to the attainment of a deep meditative state.

2. With the eyelids half closed (or completely closed, if this is more comfortable to you), look upward, focusing the gaze and the attention as though looking out through a point between the eyebrows. (A person deep in concentration often "knits" his brows at this spot.) Do not cross

the eyes or strain them; the upward gaze comes naturally when one is relaxed and calmly concentrated. What *is* important is fixing the *whole attention* at the point between the eyebrows. This is the Christ Consciousness center, the seat of the single eye spoken of by Christ: "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light" (Matthew 6:22). When the purpose of meditation is fulfilled, the devotee finds his consciousness automatically concentrated at the spiritual eye, and he experiences, according to his inner spiritual capacity, a state of joyous divine union with Spirit.

A breathing exercise to prepare for meditation...

When you are established in the meditation pose just described, the next preparation for meditation is to rid the lungs of accumulated carbon dioxide, which causes restlessness. Expel the breath through the mouth in a double exhalation: "huh, huhhh." (This sound is made with the breath only, not the voice.) Then inhale deeply through the nostrils and tense the whole body to a count of six. Expel the breath through the mouth in a double exhalation, "huh, huhhh" and relax the tension. Repeat this three times.

Concentrate on the peace and joy of the soul...

4. Remain calm....Bid adieu to the world of sensations—sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch—and go within, where our soul expresses itself....

Dismiss all sensations of the body; dismiss all restless thoughts. Concentrate on the thought of peace and joy.

Half smile

A meditation on peace...

Mentally call to God with all the fervor and sincerity of your hearts. Consciously invoke Him in the temple of silence; and in deeper meditation, find Him in the temple of ecstasy and bliss....Through your thoughts and feelings, send Him your love with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength. Through the intuition of your soul feel the manifestation of God bursting through the clouds of your restlessness as great peace and joy. Peace and joy are the voices of God that have long slumbered beneath your ignorance, ignored and forgotten in the din of human passions.

The kingdom of God is just behind the darkness of closed eyes, and the first gate that opens to it is your peace. Exhale and relax, and feel this peace spread everywhere, within and without. Immerse yourself in that peace.

Inhale deeply. Exhale. Now forget your breath. Repeat after me:

"Father, hushed are the sounds of the world and the heavens.

"I am in the temple of quietness.

"Thine eternal kingdom of peace is spread tier upon tier before my gaze. May this infinite kingdom, long hidden behind the darkness, remain manifest within me.

"Peace fills my body; peace fills my heart and dwells within my love; peace within, without, everywhere.

"God is peace. I am His child. I am peace. God and I are one.

"Infinite peace surrounds my life and permeates all the moments of my existence. Peace unto myself; peace unto my family; peace unto my nation; peace unto my world; peace unto my cosmos.

"Goodwill to all nations, goodwill to all crea-

tures; for all are my brothers and God is our common Father. We live in the United States of the World with God and Truth as our leaders.

"Heavenly Father, may Thy kingdom of peace come on earth as it is in heaven, that we all be freed from divisive inharmonies and become perfect citizens, in body, mind, and soul, of Thy world."

Meditate until you feel the divine response...

You should continue to concentrate at the Christ Consciousness center between the eyebrows, praying deeply to God and His great saints. In the language of your heart invoke their presence and their blessings. A good practice is to take an affirmation or a prayer...and spiritualize it with your own devotional yearning. Silently chant and pray to God, keeping the attention at the point between the eyebrows, until you feel God's response as calm, deep peace and inner joy.

CHAPTER

III

The Spiritual Art of Relaxation: Removing Stress From Body and Mind

Physical culturists, health enthusiasts, and spiritual teachers all talk on the subject of relaxation; nevertheless, few persons understand what perfect relaxation of body and mind really is, or how to achieve such relaxation.

Even as an automobile standing with the engine running burns energy, so also many persons, even though they may be sleeping, sitting, or lying down, are actually partly tensed (low, medium, or high) according to the degree of their mental nervousness; they are thus burning

energy even when their bodies are apparently at rest.

Sometime when you are sitting or lying down and feeling completely relaxed, with the breath expelled make this test: Have someone lift your hands or feet a little way and then drop them. If your limbs fall with a thud, without even an involuntary effort on your part to lower them gradually, you are relaxed.

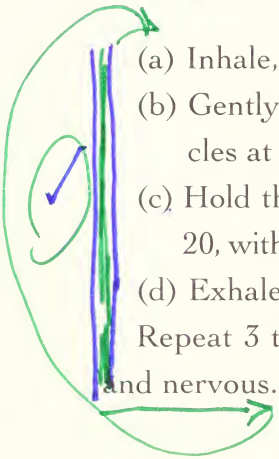
Any time you are tired or worried, tense the whole body, then relax, throwing your breath out, and you will become calm. When only low or partial tensing precedes release of tension, not all tension is removed; but when you tense high, so that you are vibrating with energy, and then quickly relax or "let go," you achieve perfect relaxation.

Remove tension from the muscles...

[Technique* for relaxing the body:]

Tense with will: By command of will, direct the life energy (through the process of tension) to flood the body or any body part. Feel the energy vibrating there, energizing and revitalizing. *Relax and feel:* Relax the tension, and feel the soothing tingle of new life and vitality in the recharged area. *Feel* that you are not the body; you are that life which sustains the body. *Feel* the peace, the freedom, the increased awareness that comes with the calmness produced by the practice of this technique.

* Simplified reference to a special technique developed in 1916 by Paramahansa Yogananda to recharge the body with vitality and to promote perfect relaxation; taught in *Self-Realization Fellowship Lessons.* The general principle of tensing and relaxing has in recent years been popularly endorsed and used by medical science as an aid in many maladies, including reduction of nervousness and high blood pressure.



(a) Inhale, holding the breath.

(b) Gently contract the entire body, all muscles at once.

(c) Hold the contraction for a count of 1 to 20, with deep attention on the entire body.

(d) Exhale, releasing the contraction.

Repeat 3 times, at any time you feel weak and nervous.

Relaxation and mental peace...

A body that is relaxed and calm conduces to mental peace.

Disturbing psychological states can be substantially alleviated by consciously removing their outer physiological manifestations. Fear often causes you to clench your fists and to incline your head slightly forward; and it is certain to cause palpitation of your heart. If you watch for such physiological reactions and relax your hands, straighten your body, breathe slowly and deeply and then exhale the breath and keep it out as long as is comfortable, concentrating on the inner calmness of breathlessness, you will feel some relief from the fear.

Learning the art of mental relaxation...

Some persons have learned how to relax physically, but not mentally.

Mental relaxation consists in the ability to free the attention at will from nagging worries over past and present difficulties; from constant awareness of duty; from dread of accidents and other haunting fears; and from greed, passion, or other disturbing or negative thoughts and attachments. Mastery in mental relaxation comes with faithful practice. It is attained when one is able to rid the mind at will of all restless thoughts and fix the attention fully on the peace and contentment within.

When you are struggling in the water, you

are not so much conscious of the water as you are of your struggle. But when you let go and relax, you float; then you feel the whole lake lapping soothingly around your body. That is the way God is. When you are calm, you feel the whole universe of happiness rocking gently beneath your consciousness. That happiness is God.

When you can remain calm at all times, despite severe trials; and when you are secure in undying faith in God, you are mentally relaxed.

Even mental relaxation is only one of the first states of metaphysical or super relaxation, in which there is complete, voluntary withdrawal of consciousness and energy from the entire body, and full absorption in one's true identity: Spirit. This release of consciousness

from the delusion of duality affords the highest kind of mental relaxation.*

Fix your mind inwardly between the eyebrows on the shoreless lake of peace. Watch the eternal circle of rippling peace around you. The more you watch intently, the more you will feel the wavelets of peace spreading from the eyebrows to the forehead, from the forehead to the heart, and on to every cell in your body. Now the waters of peace are overflowing the banks of your body and inundating the vast territory of your mind. The flood of peace flows over the boundaries of your mind and moves on in infinite directions.

* This blissful state is the goal of, and is made possible by, practice of the science of *Kriya Yoga* meditation, taught by Paramahansa Yogananda (see page 121).

C H A P T E R

IV

How to Be "Calmly Active"— Centered in Peace No Matter What You Are Doing

To be calmly active and actively calm—a Prince of Peace sitting on the throne of poise, directing the kingdom of activity—is to be spiritually healthy. Too much activity makes one an automaton and too much calmness makes one lazy and impractical. Peace is the enjoyment of life; activity is the expression of life. A balance between the activity of the West and the calmness of the East is needed.

Retain your calmness. Ordinary life is like a

pendulum, ceaselessly swinging back and forth. The peaceful person remains calm until he is ready to work; then he swings into action. As soon as he is through, he swings back to the center of calmness. You should always be calm, like the pendulum that is still, but ready to swing into steady action whenever necessary.

Self-realization: awareness of one's self, soul, spirit, God.

Balancing your spiritual and material life...

The material and the spiritual are but two parts of one universe and one truth. By overstressing one part or the other, man fails to achieve the balance necessary for harmonious development....Practice the art of living in this world without losing your inner peace of mind. Follow the path of balance to reach the inner wondrous garden of Self-realization.

As God is omnipresent in the cosmos but is undisturbed by its variety, so man, who as a soul is individualized Spirit, must learn to participate in this cosmic drama with a perfectly poised and equilibrated mind.

The spiritual aspirant should counterbalance his restlessness-producing material activity by calmness-producing spiritual meditation.

Learn to be very active in this world, doing constructive work; but when you are through with your duties, turn off your nervous motor. Retire to the center of your being, which is calmness. Mentally affirm to yourself: "I am calm. I am not a mere nervous mechanism; I am Spirit. Though I dwell in this body, I am untouched by it." If you have a calm nervous system, you will have success in everything you undertake; and, above all, you will succeed with God.

Simplify your life...

The pleasure of modern man is in getting more and more, and what happens to anyone else doesn't matter. But isn't it better to live simply—without so many luxuries and with fewer worries? There is no pleasure in driving yourself until you cannot enjoy what you have.

It takes too much time and energy to keep too many possessions in good order. The truth of the matter is that the more unnecessary "necessities" you have, the less peace you have; and the less you are possessed by possessions, the more happiness you have.

Don't get caught in the machine of the world—it is too exacting. By the time you get what

you are seeking your nerves are gone, the heart is damaged, and the bones are aching.

Man's great need is to find more time to enjoy nature, to simplify his life and his imaginary necessities, to enjoy the true needs of his existence, to learn to know his children and friends better, and most of all, to know *himself* and the God who made him.

Seclusion is the price of greatness...

When you have finished your duties at the end of the day, sit quietly alone. Take a good book and read it with attention. Then meditate long and deeply. You will find much more peace and happiness in this than in restless activities in which your mind runs riot in all directions....

If you cultivate the habit of spending time alone at home in meditation, a great power and peace will come over you. And it will remain with you in your activities as well as in meditation. Seclusion is the price of greatness.

Seek quiet places where you can regularly get away by yourself and be free to think of God. When you are with people, be with them wholeheartedly; give them your love and attention. But also take time to be alone with God.

Every person needs a retreat, a dynamo of silence where he may go for the exclusive purpose of being recharged by the Infinite.

The spiritual value of the Sabbath...

Six full days and nights of machine-like existence, and part of one day (Sunday) for the cultivation of one's inner self, is not a balanced way of life. The week should be allotted to work, amusement, and spiritual culture: five days for money-making, one day for rest and amusement, and at least one day for introspection and inner realization.

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." Out of a week of seven days, how few people devote even one to God! To keep apart one day for Him is in the best interests of your own welfare. Sunday is the sun's day—the bright day of wisdom. Many never use it to think of God, though to do so is the highest wisdom. If on that day, you could just be alone and quiet for a little time, enjoying that stillness, you

would see how much better you feel. Observe the sabbath in this way; it will be a salve to the lacerations of the preceding six days. Everyone needs one day a week in the spiritual hospital to heal his mental wounds.

Don't observe the sabbath as a forced duty; enjoy it. When it becomes for you a day of peace and joy and contentment, you will look forward to it.

You may be surprised at what seclusion with God will do for your mind, body, and soul.

India's sages counsel not only a regular day for seclusion, but stress the need for quiet meditation during four specific periods every day. In the early morning, before you get up or see anyone, remain calm, feeling peace. At noon, be quiet for a while before taking lunch; and

before your evening meal, have another time for peace. Before going to bed, go into that silence again. Those who faithfully observe silence in seclusion during these four times of the day cannot but feel in tune with God. Whoever cannot manage four times a day should observe each morning and evening a period devoted to God. By doing this you will have a different, happier life.

Four times a day sit quietly in meditation and think with all the love and longing of your heart: "I am with the Infinite now. 'Father, reveal Thyself, reveal Thyself.'" Strive to feel the peace of His presence. Bathe your mind and body in that peace, and you will be much more successful in life. The calm man doesn't make mistakes. When thousands of others are failing, he succeeds. You must be calm to be successful. Those

who do not observe the sabbath by feeling this divine peace develop great moodiness. They become nervous automatons. Through the portals of silence the healing sun of wisdom and peace will shine upon you.

Calmness brings harmony and good judgment to all activities...

A calm person has his senses fully identified with the environment in which he places himself. A restless person does not notice anything, consequently he gets into trouble with himself and others and misunderstands everything. A calm person, by the virtue of his self-possession, is always at peace with others, always happy, always calm. Never change the center of your concentration from calmness to restlessness. Perform activities only with concentration.

Good judgment is a natural expression of wisdom; but it is directly dependent on harmony within, which is poise of mind. When the mind lacks harmony, it has no peace; and without peace it lacks both judgment and wisdom. Life is full of bumps and knocks. In the hours

of trials, which demand your keenest judgment, if you preserve your mental equilibrium you will attain victory. Inner harmony is your greatest supporter in bearing the burden of life.

Many persons think that their actions have to be either restless or slow. That is not true. If you keep calm, with intense concentration, you will perform all duties with the correct speed. The art of true action is to be able to act slowly or speedily without losing your inner peace. The proper method is to establish a controlled attitude, wherein you can work with peace without losing your balance.

A calm person reflects restfulness in his eyes, keen intelligence in his face, and proper receptivity in his mind. He is a [person] of decisive and prompt action, but he is not moved by im-

pulses and desires that suddenly occur to him. A restless person is like a puppet that dances at the instigation of emotional desires arising in response to the temptation offered by others. Be sure to work, slowly or fast, from a center of calmness.

Open the door of your calmness and let the footsteps of silence gently enter the temple of all your activities. Perform all duties serenely, saturated with peace. Behind the throb of your heart, you shall feel the throb of God's peace.

CALMNESS

CHAPTER

V

Peace in Your Daily Life: Essential Principles and Practices

If you continually write out checks without depositing anything in your bank account, you will run out of money. So it is with your life. Without regular deposits of peace in your life account, you will run out of strength, calmness, and happiness. You will finally become bankrupt—emotionally, mentally, physically, and spiritually. But daily communion with God will continually replenish your inner bankroll.

Everyone has at times been nervous, more

or less, without knowing why. . . Restlessness, emotional excitement, concentrates too much energy in the nerves so that they begin to wear out. After years and years, the adverse effects of that nervousness begin to show. The nerves are very tough—God made them so, because they have to last a lifetime—but it is necessary to give them proper care. When you stop overloading the nervous system, as when you are in deep sleep or a state of calmness in meditation, you are not nervous at all.

Nervousness can be cured. The sufferer must be willing to analyze his condition and remove the disintegrating emotions and negative thoughts that are little by little destroying him. Objective analysis of one's problems, and maintaining calmness in all situations of life will heal the most persistent case of nervousness.

Examine yourself to see if you are nervous, and then determine what it is that makes you nervous.

Causes of stress and nervousness...

The disturbance of mental equilibrium, which results in nervous disorders, is caused by continuous states of excitement or excessive stimulation of the senses.

Indulgence in constant thoughts of fear, anger, melancholy, remorse, envy, sorrow, hatred, discontent, or worry; and lack of the necessities for normal and happy living, such as right food, proper exercise, fresh air, sunshine, agreeable work and a purpose in life, all are the causes of nervous disease.

Any violent or persistent mental, emotional, or physical excitement greatly disturbs and unbalances the flow of life force throughout the sensory-motor mechanism and the lamps of the senses. If we connect a 120-volt bulb with a 2,000-volt source, it would burn out the bulb. Similarly, the nervous system was not made to withstand the destructive force of in-

tense emotion or persistent negative thoughts and feelings.

Another cause of nervousness, though you may not be aware of it, is the noise of the radio or television going on for hours at a time. All sounds cause the nerves to react.* A study conducted in the police department in Chicago showed that if human beings were not subjected to the bombardment of the sounds of modern living, which are especially harsh in cities, they could live years longer. Learn to

*Many researchers have described the adverse effects of noise on human health, including Dr. Samuel Rosen, clinical professor of otolaryngology at Columbia University, who wrote: "It is known that loud noises cause effects which the recipient cannot control. The blood vessels constrict, the skin pales, the voluntary and involuntary muscles tense, and adrenaline is suddenly injected into the blood stream, which increases neuromuscular tension, nervousness, irritability, and anxiety."

enjoy silence; don't listen to the radio or television for hours on end, or have them blaring mindlessly in the background all the time.

All forms of meat of higher animals, especially beef and pork, are harmful to the nervous system; they are hyperstimulating and cause aggressiveness. Avoid too much starch, especially foods made from refined flour. Eat whole grains, cottage cheese, and plenty of fruits, fruit juices, and fresh vegetables—these are important. Needless to say, alcoholic beverages and drugs destroy the nervous system; stay away from them.

A yogic drink that is very good for the nervous system is made by adding crushed rock candy and fresh lime juice to a glass of water. It should be thoroughly mixed and evenly blended so that the taste is equally sweet and sour. I have

recommended this to many people with excellent results.

Remember that the greatest healing of nervousness takes place when we attune our lives to God. (Divine Love.)

Know the divine laws of inner peace and happiness...

Morality, like a chameleon, tends to take on the color of the circumambient society; but the inscrutable laws of Nature, through which God upholds His creation, are ever unaltered by man's determinations.

Happiness is rooted in morality and godliness.

Those who go against divine law pay for it by lack of inner peace.

Movie stars and other professional entertainers are considered the beautiful people of America. But why are their personal lives so often in a shambles of unhappiness and multiple divorces?

Most of them live too much on nervous energy concentrated in the senses. Overeating, promiscuous sex, the intoxication of wine and drugs—all produce a pseudo happiness.

[Moral laws] harmonize body and mind with the divine laws of nature, or creation, producing an inner and outer well-being, happiness, and strength.

This is why moral success—freedom from the dictates of wrong habits and impulses—gives more happiness than material success. In moral success there is a psychological happiness that cannot be taken away by any physical condition.... Adopt those thoughts and actions that lead to happiness.

Those who are inwardly content are living rightly. Happiness comes only by doing right.

Nervousness is the disease of civilization...

Nervousness is the disease of civilization. I remember when some of us were driving up Pikes Peak in Colorado. Other cars were speeding past us on the steep, winding grade. I thought they were hurrying to get to the mountaintop in time to see the sunrise. To my great amazement, when we arrived we were the only ones outside to enjoy the view. All the others were in the restaurant drinking coffee and eating doughnuts. Imagine! They rushed to the top and then rushed back, just for the thrill of being able to say when they got home that they had been there, and had coffee and doughnuts on Pikes Peak. That is what nervousness does.

We should take time to enjoy things—the beauties of God's creation, the many blessings of life—but avoid undue excitement, restless-

ness, and sudden emotions, which burn up the nervous system.

If you spend your life in constant excitement, you will never know true happiness. Live simply and take life more easily. Happiness lies in giving yourself time to think and to introspect. Be alone once in a while, and remain more in silence.

Overcoming worry...

Everyone needs to let go of his worries and enter into absolute silence every morning and night. At such times, try to persist for one minute at a time without thinking about your problems. Concentrate instead on the peace within. Then try to concentrate for several minutes at a time on this inner peace. Next, think of some happy incident; dwell on it, and visualize it; mentally relive the pleasant experience over and over again until you have discarded your worries entirely.

If we could but realize the effect on ourselves of the burdens we often place upon the mind, we might wonder that we have not had a breakdown long ago. Taxing our minds with all kinds of worries and anxieties, we are soon overwhelmed by the load. Fear creeps in as a

result and we lose our mental poise and spiritual balance.

The trouble with us is that instead of living only in the present, we try to live in the past and in the future at the same time. These loads are too heavy for the mind to carry, so we must restrict the amount of the load. The past is gone. Why continue to carry it in the mind? Let the mind take care of its burdens one at a time.

A swan eats only the solid content from the liquid he scoops up in his bill; similarly we should keep in mind only the lessons we have learned from the past and forget unnecessary details. This will relieve the mind to a great extent; and it will eliminate worries.

Worry may be compared to an insect that eats away at the inside of a flower. When the petals close in, both the flower and the insect die. Worry consumes all our inner vitality without our conscious knowledge. When we wake

up to what is happening, the damage, which may have a far-reaching effect on the nervous system, is already done.

When we have too much to do at one time, we become very discouraged. Instead of worrying about what should be done, just say: "This hour is mine. I will do the best I can." The clock cannot tick twenty-four hours away in one minute, and you cannot do in one hour what you can do in twenty-four hours. Live each present moment completely and the future will take care of itself. Fully enjoy the wonder and beauty of each instant. Practice the presence of peace. The more you do that, the more you will feel the presence of that power in your life.

Instead of wasting time worrying, think pos-

itively about how the cause of the problem can be removed. If you want to get rid of a trouble, calmly analyze your difficulty, setting down point by point the pros and cons of the matter; then determine what steps might be best to accomplish your goal.

Forget the past, for it is gone from your domain! Forget the future, for it is beyond your reach! Control the present! Live supremely well now! It will whitewash the dark past, and compel the future to be bright! This is the way of the wise.

Overcoming fear...

Cast off fear. What is there to be afraid of? Even a little bit of fear, such as senseless apprehension of the dark or worrying about things that "might" happen, affects the nerves more than you can imagine.

Never be afraid of anything. Fear is a form of nervousness. As long as you are not dead, you are alive; so why should you fear? And once you are dead it is all over and you cannot remember; so why worry?

Fear comes from the heart. If ever you feel overcome by dread of some illness or accident, you should inhale and exhale deeply, slowly, and rhythmically several times, relaxing with each exhalation. This helps the circulation to

become normal. If your heart is truly quiet you cannot feel fear at all.

Realization that all power to think, speak, feel, and act comes from God, and that He is ever with us, inspiring and guiding us, brings an instant freedom from nervousness. Flashes of divine joy will come with this realization; sometimes a deep illumination will pervade one's being, banishing the very concept of fear. Like an ocean, the power of God sweeps in, surging through the heart in a cleansing flood, removing all obstructions of delusive doubt, nervousness, and fear. The delusion of matter, the consciousness of being only a mortal body, is overcome by contacting the sweet serenity of Spirit, attainable by daily meditation. Then you know that the body is a little bubble of energy in His cosmic sea.

Overcoming anger by inner peace...

Absence of wrath is the quickest way to peace of mind.

Anger is caused by the obstruction of one's desires....One who does not expect anything from others but who looks to God for all fulfillments cannot feel wrath toward his fellow men or disappointment in them. A sage is content in the knowledge that the Lord is running the universe....He is free from rage, animosity, and resentment.

Peace *(shanti)* is a divine quality...One united to "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding"* is like a lovely rose, spreading around him the fragrance of tranquility and harmony.

* Philippians 4:7

Affirm divine calmness and peace, and send out only thoughts of love and goodwill if you want to live in peace and harmony. Never get angry, for anger poisons your system. Try to understand people who cross you, and whenever anybody tries to inflame you, mentally say: "I am too comfortable to be angry. I don't want to be sick with anger." (I want calmness, peace, joy).

When you are angry, say nothing. Knowing it is a disease, like the coming of a cold, break it up by mental warm baths consisting of thinking of those with whom you can never be angry, no matter how they behave. If your emotion is too violent, take a cold shower, or put a piece of ice on the medulla oblongata and the temples just above the ears, and on the fore-

head, especially between the eyebrows, and on the top of the head....

Anger is poison to peace and calmness....Be indifferent to those who seem to enjoy making you angry. When anger comes, set your machinery of calmness in motion to manufacture the antidotes of peace, love, and forgiveness which banish anger. Think of love, and reflect that even as you do not want others to be angry with you, neither do you wish others to feel your ugly anger.

Develop metaphysical reason and destroy anger. Look upon the anger-arousing agent as a child of God; think of him as a little five-year-old baby brother who perhaps has unwittingly stabbed you. You should not feel a desire to stab this little brother in return. Mentally destroy anger by saying: "I will not poison my peace with anger; I will not disturb my habitual joy-giving calmness with wrath."

Remember that if you remain inwardly calm under all circumstances you can conquer anything or anyone. True calmness means that God is with you. If you become restless, you will irritate people and they will be angry with you. Then you will be miserable....

If someone is trying to get you in trouble, affirm continuously, "I am peace, I am calm," and say it deeply. No matter how others may try to shake you, hold on to that peace. Your nerves will then be calm.

If anyone can make you angry, you have not yet attained perfect calmness; but maintaining calmness does not mean that you should let others make a doormat out of you. Sometimes it is necessary to make others understand that you mean business; but you are a child of God and you should never be angry. The more often you lose your temper, the longer you will

remain in the delusory mortal consciousness; but if you remain inwardly calm, you are demonstrating the poise of a true child of God.

Peace in the home...

As you find your soul-reservoir of peace, less and less controversy will be able to afflict your life.

Remember that the greatest test of one's spiritual aspiration lies in his control of himself in his own home environment—especially if it is a discordant one. If a person's inner peace can exhibit stability and strength at home, and if he conquers others' quarrelsome dispositions by his constant, beautiful expressions of undying love, then he will become a prince of peace.

Make your home a place of peace.

If your husband or wife gets angry and rouses your ire, take a little walk and cool off

before responding. If he or she speaks sharply, don't retort in the same way. It is better to remain quiet until the temper has cooled down. ...Never let anyone rob you of your peace; and do not steal away the peace of others by your verbal misbehavior....

If your wife screeches at you and you shout back, you will suffer twice as much—once from her harsh words and again from your own. You primarily harm yourself. By the time you get through, you will feel that there is nothing left of you. This is why there are so many divorces.

Frankly, people should not marry until they have learned to have some control of their emotions. The schools should educate young students in this art, and in how to develop calmness and concentration. The American home is breaking up because these things are not taught —neither at home nor in the schools. How can

two people who are habituated to nervous activity live together without almost destroying each other with their nervousness? In the beginning of a marriage, the bride and groom are carried along on the emotions of excitement and passion. But after a while, when these inevitably start to wane, the true natures of the couple begin to come out and the quarreling and disillusionments set in.

The heart requires true love, friendship, and, above all, peace. When through emotion peace is destroyed, it is a desecration of the bodily temple. A healthy nervous system is what will maintain in proper order all the bodily organs and feelings. And to keep the nervous system healthy, it is important to remain free from devastating emotions such as fear, anger, greed, jealousy.

These caustic mental parasites eat away the very fiber of one's being. They burn and destroy inner peace—one's greatest wealth.

Don't be touchy or oversensitive...

Sensitiveness expresses itself in a lack of control over the nervous system. A thought of being offended runs through the mind and the nerves rebel against it. In reacting, some persons seethe inwardly with anger or hurt feelings and show no irritation outwardly. Others express their emotions in an obvious and instant reaction in the muscles of their eyes and face—and often in a sharp retort of their tongue as well. In either case, to be touchy is to make oneself miserable, and to create a negative vibration that also adversely affects others. To be able always to spread an aura of goodness and peace should be the motive of life. Even if there is good reason for being excited because of mistreatment, one who instead controls himself in such a situation is master of himself.

Nothing is accomplished by silently brooding over some perceived offense. It is best to remove by self-mastery the cause that produces such sensitiveness.

When anything distresses you, no matter how you justify your unhappiness, know that you are succumbing to undue sensitivity, and that you must not indulge in it. Sensitiveness is an unspiritual habit, a nervous habit, a peace-destroying habit that takes away your control over yourself and robs you of your happiness. Whenever a mood of sensitiveness visits the heart, its static prevents you from hearing the divine song of healing peace that plays within through the radio of the soul. Whenever sensitiveness appears, try immediately to conquer that emotion.

If you keep your mind on the resolve never to lose your peace, then you can attain godliness. Keep a secret chamber of silence within yourself, where you will not let moods, trials, battles, or inharmony enter. Keep out all hatred, revengefulness, and desires. In this chamber of peace God will visit you.

The face is the reflector of your inner self; the heart, the source of feelings, is the basis of that reflection. Your face should be an inspiring sermon. Your countenance should be a beacon for others to follow, a lighthouse by which shipwrecked souls can find the way to safety in the harbor of peace.

Affirmations:

Daily, make this affirmation: "I will be neither lazy nor feverishly active. In every challenge of life I shall do my best without worrying about the future."

Realize that the infinite presence of the Heavenly Father is ever within you. Tell Him: "In life and death, health and sickness, I worry not, O Lord, for I am Thy child evermore."

CHAPTER

VI

The Wisdom Perspective That Leads to Inner Peace

Life, its substance and purpose, is an enigma, difficult yet not unknowable. With our progressive thinking, we are daily solving some of its secrets. The minutely and scientifically calculated devices of this modern age are certainly remarkable. The proliferating discoveries of physical science are creditably giving us a clearer vision of the ways by which life can be improved. But in spite of all our devices and strategies and inventions, it seems we are still playthings in the hands of destiny, and have a long way to go before we can be independent of nature's domination.

To be constantly at the mercies of nature—surely that is not freedom. Our enthusiastic minds are rudely seized by a sense of helplessness when we are victimized by floods, tornadoes, or earthquakes; or when, apparently without rhyme or reason, illness or accident snatches our dear ones from our bosom. It is then that we know we really haven't conquered much. In spite of all our efforts to make life what we want it to be, there will always remain certain conditions introduced on this planet—infinite and guided by an unknown Intelligence, operating without our initiative—which preclude our control. At best, we can only work and make some improvements. We sow the wheat and make the flour, but who made the original seed? We eat the bread made from the flour, but who made it possible for us to digest and assimilate it?

In every department of life there seems to be,

in spite of our instrumentality, an inevitable Divine dependence without which we cannot get along. With all our certainties, we still have to abide an uncertain existence. We do not know when the heart is going to fail. Hence comes the necessity of a fearless reliance on our true immortal Self and on the Supreme Deity in whose image that Self is made—a faith that acts without egoism, and plods on merrily, knowing no trepidation or constraint.

Exercise absolute fearless surrender to that Higher Power. Never mind that today you make the resolution that you are free and undaunted, and then tomorrow you catch the flu and become miserably sick. Don't weaken! Command your consciousness to remain steadfast in its faith. The Self cannot be contaminated by sickness.

Don't behave like a cringing mortal being. You are a child of God!

You are made in His image. You cannot be violated or hurt by stones, nor bombs, nor machine guns, nor atomic bombs. Remember, the best shelter is in the silence of your soul. And if you can develop that silence, nothing in the world can touch you.... You can stand unshaken midst the crash of breaking worlds.

Place your heart with God. The more you seek peace in Him, the more that peace will devour your worries and sufferings.

View the spectacle of life as a cosmic drama...

The *rishis* of ancient India, having penetrated to the Original Cause of Being, declare ...that this world is God's *lila*, or divine play. The Lord, it seems, like a little child, loves to play, and His *lila* is the endless variety of ever-changing creation....

God created this dream universe for entertaining Himself and us. The only objection I have to God's *lila* is this: "Lord, why did You permit suffering to be a part of the play?" Pain is so ugly and torturing. Existence then is no longer entertainment, but a tragedy. That is where the intercession of the saints comes in. They remind us that God is all-powerful, and if we unite ourselves with Him, we will no longer be hurt in this playhouse of His. It is we who inflict pain on ourselves if we transgress the divine laws on which He rests the whole universe. Our salvation is to unite with Him. Un-

less we attune ourselves to God and know thereby that this world is but a cosmic entertainment, we are bound to suffer. It seems that suffering is a necessary discipline to remind us to seek union with God. Then, like Him, we will be entertained by this fantastic play.

You have come on earth to entertain and to be entertained. This is why life should be a combination of both meditation and activity. If you lose your inner balance, that is just the time when you are vulnerable to worldly suffering.... Awaken the innate fortitude of the mind by affirming, "No matter what experiences come, they cannot touch me. I am always happy."

Watch life as a cosmic motion picture, then it cannot work its delusive magic on you any-

more. Be in God-bliss....He has made you already what He is. That is what you don't realize, because you acknowledge only that you are a human being; you do not know that this thought is a delusion.

God's dream creation was not meant to frighten you, but to prod you to realize finally that it has no reality. So why be afraid of anything? Jesus said: "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?" (John 10:34).

You are immortal and are endowed with eternal joy. Never forget this during your play with changeable mortal life. This world is but a stage on which you play your parts under the direction of the Divine Stage Manager. Play them well, whether they are tragic or comic, always remembering that your real nature is

eternal Bliss, and nothing else. The one thing that will never leave you, once you transcend all unstable mental states, is the joy of your soul.

live.
Yet, in the Cosmic Drama, life
lives on life: all living things
devour other living things.

Live in unruffled equanimity...

The saints have found that happiness lies in a constant mental state of unruffled peace during all the experiences of earthly dualities. A changeable mind perceives a changeable creation, and is easily disturbed; the unchangeable soul and the unruffled mind, on the other hand, behold, behind the masks of change, the Eternal Spirit.

The test of man's wisdom is his equanimity. Little stones that are pelted into the lake of consciousness should not throw the whole lake into commotion.

Life is a show; don't take it too seriously...

Why take the surface details of life so seriously? Be drunk with the inner peace of divine realization, whatever your earthly lot.

Whether man be agitated or calm, life will pursue its own strange course forever. Worry, fear, discouragement, only add to the weight of daily burdens; cheerfulness, optimism, will power, bring about resolutions to problems. So the best way to live is to take life as a cosmic game, with its inevitable contrasts of defeat and victory. Enjoy the challenges as you would in a sport, no matter whether at the moment you are victorious or vanquished.

Give greatest importance to cultivating through daily soul-awakening meditation your

relationship with God and your inner happiness. When you are in the perfect calm of soul awareness, you see God moving in all creation. You do not see the world anymore as a nightmare of troubles, but as an entertaining spectacle to be enjoyed. Then you shall smile from the depths of your being, a smile that can never be destroyed.

Knowing God, you can stand unshaken midst the crash of breaking worlds...

Practice meditation and God-communion regularly, and you will taste the wine of joy and pleasantness all the time, no matter what your outer circumstances. Drinking the nectar of inner peace from the angel hands of your silent realization, you will drown the distractions and sorrows of your daily life.

God is present on the throne of peace within you. Find Him there first, and you will find Him in all that is good and meaningful in life: in true friends, in the beauty of nature, in good books, deep thoughts, and noble aspirations. Finding God within you, you will know that whatever in life gives you enduring peace is declaring to you the eternal presence of God, without as well as within. When you know

God as peace within, you will realize Him as peace existing in the universal harmony of all things without.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA (1893–1952) is widely regarded as one of the preeminent spiritual figures of our time. Born in northern India, he came to the United States in 1920, where for more than thirty years he taught India's ancient science of meditation and the art of balanced spiritual living. Through his acclaimed life story, *Autobiography of a Yogi*, and his numerous other books, Paramahansa Yogananda has introduced millions of readers to the perennial wisdom of the East. Under the guidance of one of his earliest and closest disciples, Sri Daya Mata, his spiritual and humanitarian work is carried on by Self-Realization Fellowship, the international society he founded in 1920 to disseminate his teachings worldwide.

Also published by Self-Realization Fellowship...

Autobiography of a Yogi
by Paramahansa Yogananda

This acclaimed autobiography is at once a riveting account of an extraordinary life and a penetrating and unforgettable look at the ultimate mysteries of human existence. Hailed as a landmark work of spiritual literature when it first appeared in print, it remains one of the most widely read and respected books ever published on the wisdom of the East.

With engaging candor, eloquence, and wit, Paramahansa Yogananda narrates the inspiring chronicle of his life—the experiences of his remarkable childhood, encounters with many saints and sages during his youthful search throughout India for an illumined teacher, ten years of training in the hermitage of a revered yoga master, and the thirty years that he lived and taught in America. He records as well his meetings with Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Luther Burbank, the Catholic stigmatist Therese Neumann, and other celebrated spiritual personalities of East and West. Also included is extensive material that he added after the first edition came out in 1946, with a final chapter on the closing years of his life.

Considered a modern spiritual classic, *Autobiography of a Yogi* offers a profound introduction to the ancient science of Yoga. It has been translated into many languages and is widely used in college and university courses. A perennial best-seller, the book has found its way into the hearts of millions of readers around the world.

"A rare account."—The New York Times

"A fascinating and clearly annotated study."—Newsweek

"There has been nothing before, written in English or in any other European language, like this presentation of Yoga."
—Columbia University Press

OTHER BOOKS BY PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

Available at bookstores or directly from the publisher

Autobiography of a Yogi

Autobiography of a Yogi *(Audiobook, read by Ben Kingsley)*

God Talks With Arjuna: *The Bhagavad Gita*
(A New Translation and Commentary)

The Collected Talks and Essays
Volume I: Man's Eternal Quest
Volume II: The Divine Romance
Volume III: Journey to Self-realization:
Discovering the Gifts of the Soul

Wine of the Mystic: *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam—*
A Spiritual Interpretation

The Science of Religion

Whispers from Eternity

Songs of the Soul

Sayings of Paramahansa Yogananda

Scientific Healing Affirmations

Where There Is Light:
Insight and Inspiration for Meeting Life's Challenges

In the Sanctuary of the Soul

How You Can Talk With God

Metaphysical Meditations

The Law of Success

Cosmic Chants

A World in Transition: Finding
Spiritual Security in Times of Change
(Anthology—Paramahansa Yogananda and other monastics of Self-Realization Fellowship)

Self-Realization Fellowship Lessons

The scientific techniques of meditation taught by Paramahansa Yogananda, including *Kriya Yoga*—as well as his guidance on all aspects of balanced spiritual living—are taught in the Self-Realization Fellowship Lessons. For further information, you are welcome to write for the free booklet, *Undreamed-of Possibilities.*

SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP
3880 San Rafael Avenue • Los Angeles, CA 90065-3298
TEL (323) 225-2471 • FAX (323) 225-5088
www.yogananda-srf.org